

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of apparatus for achieving and maintaining alignment of a data receiver to data frames in the presence of noise is taught. A statistical weighting process is employed to sample synchronization symbols that reoccur in data frames. The information is used to maintain alignment to the data frames by tolerating a greater number of data errors. A plurality of synchronization symbols are decoded with a weighted probability of error in decoding determined for each. The weighted probabilities are combined and the resultant value is compared to a threshold value. If the threshold is met, then alignment is achieved or maintained based upon the statistical process. Improved performance in lower SNR environments is achieved.